

# CALFED BAY-DELTA WATERSHED PROGRAM

## BDAC Watershed Work Group Meeting Summary

**Meeting Date:** Friday, January 21, 2000

**Meeting Location:** Jones & Stokes  
2600 V Street  
Sacramento, CA

**Meeting Attendees:** See Attachment A

### Introductions

The meeting began with introductions of the meeting participants. A list of attendees (Attachment A) and meeting handouts (Attachment B) is included

### FY2000 Watershed Program Priorities

John Lowrie (Watershed Program Manager) updated the Work Group on the status of Watershed Program funds for fiscal year 2000 (FY2000). Although funding has not been specifically allocated to the Watershed Program; there is the potential for the Watershed Program to receive some funding for FY2000. Therefore, Mr. Lowrie has been encouraged to continue the development of Watershed Program priorities for this year. The primary purpose of FY2000 implementation of the Watershed Program is to demonstrate the value and contributions of watershed management using a community-based approach to achieving CALFED goals for the Bay-Delta system and broader solution area. Martha Davis (Work Group Co-chair) reminded the Work Group that illustrating the benefits that accrue from watershed plans and projects are one of the objectives of the Watershed Program Plan. In an effort to accomplish this task, Mr. Lowrie stated that the Watershed Program will select a set of projects which best:

- Define and illustrate relationships between watershed processes and the primary goals and objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (CALFED);
- Address one or more specific outcomes identified as a priority by CALFED during Stage I;
- Demonstrate the value of watershed efforts to CALFED in geographically diverse locations within the solution area; and
- Demonstrate the value of a community based approach in addressing a diversity of issues, circumstances, and community characteristics found within different watersheds within the solution area.

Mr. Lowrie explained that priority will be given to actions which:

- Assist local programs to develop watershed assessments and plans;
- Assist local programs to develop and implement specific watershed conservation, maintenance and restoration actions; and
- Begin to build local capacity to assess and effectively manage watersheds that affect the Bay-Delta system.

#### **Comments**

*Ms. Davis reminded the meeting participants of the watershed presentation that was made for the BDAC in November. The underlying strategy of the presentation was to relate different watersheds and the application of a watershed approach to the Bay-Delta and the CALFED process. The idea of the Watershed Program priorities for FY2000 is much of the same - "connecting the dots" very explicitly.*

*A meeting participant stated that it would be beneficial for applicants of the FY2000 proposal process to contact previously funded applicants to gain insight and knowledge of the process. CALFED staff should encourage this sharing of information.*

*A suggestion was made to have reviewers of the proposals come from different geographic regions. Every watershed is different and it is important to have local expertise included in the review process.*

*A meeting participant stated that single-purpose projects should not compete with multi-objective purposes.*

*A comment was made that the original Watershed Program Strategy included a list of stressors, but the list is not included in the current Watershed Program Plan. The current Plan should include examples of actions and what the anticipated results would be.*

*A meeting participant commented that the Ecosystem Restoration Program has gone through a painful process with their past proposals; the Watershed Program should be wary of their mistakes and be careful not to repeat them.*

#### **Next Steps**

Mr. Lowrie explained that the Watershed Program staff has been working closely with the Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT) and a sub-set of the Work Group in the development of the priorities and proposal process. They will continue to work on the proposal process and begin the development of selection criteria. A follow-up presentation of their progress will be made at the next Work Group meeting.

#### **Proposed Long-Term Governance for CALFED**

Kate Hansel (CALFED Bay-Delta Program) gave an overview of the proposed long-term governance for CALFED. Ms. Hansel presented a schematic of the proposed decision-making process which includes the CALFED programs working with the technical and stakeholder work groups and an Independent Science Review Board. Decisions would then be

forwarded to the Executive Director and a "CALFED Commission." The Commission would also work with the Independent Science Review Board and possibly an advisory council. Decisions would then be reviewed by the Governor and the Secretary of the Interior.

Ms. Hansel presented a document entitled "Proposal for CALFED Long-Term Governance." She explained that the document (in its formal form) will be included in the Final Programmatic EIS/EIR. However, this is only a proposal - it will take both federal and state legislation to implement. In the interim, the current decision-making process and the CALFED Policy Group will continue.

Ms. Hansel reviewed the principles for implementing the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. They include:

- Federal/State Partnership. The CALFED Program should be carried out through a joint State and Federal government partnership.
- Accountability. There should be a clear point of, and process for accountability of the Program to the Legislature, the Congress, stakeholders and the public.
- Commission. A new joint State/Federal CALFED Commission should be created to direct efforts to achieve CALFED Bay-Delta Program goals and objectives.
- Membership. The membership of the CALFED Commission should be made up of State, Federal, tribal, and public members.
- Funding. Funding for implementation of the CALFED Program should be appropriated directly to the Commission for those activities to be directly managed by the Commission. Funding for the CALFED Program delegated to a State or Federal agency should be appropriated directly to that agency, with control language requiring Commission approval of program plans and priorities.
- Public Involvement. The Commission's meetings should be open and public, and the Commission should seek ways to maximize public knowledge of, and involvement in, its work. The Commission should support involvement in the Program at a local level.

(Additional principles are included in the Proposal, please refer to the document for further review.)

#### ***Comments/Questions***

*Ms. Hansel was asked how BDAC and the Policy Group reacted to the proposal. She replied that the BDAC had a lengthy discussion of the principles. Ultimately, they agreed on the creation of a new commission. The Policy Group suggested that Ms. Hansel take the proposal to the agencies and the public-at-large for a "reality check."*

*A meeting participant made a comment regarding the proposed make-up of the Commission. As proposed the Commission would consist of 19 members - six public members, a tribal representative, six members representing State agencies, and six members representing Federal*

agencies. The meeting participant suggested that there be equal representation of public members and agency members. Furthermore, landowners need to be included in this process. Another meeting participant concurred with the comment and recommended that both large and small landowners are included.

A meeting participant expressed concerns about an agency dominated commission. It was suggested that CALFED review the Regional Water Quality Control Board's model. Ms. Hansel explained that the CALFED staff has examined many models over the past couple of years including models for the Chesapeake Bay and the states of Oregon and Washington. CALFED's situation is unique in that it is a federal/state partnership - federal and state agencies working together at the same level.

A meeting attendee stated that many watershed groups feel that decision-making bodies are too far removed from the on-the-ground work activities. CALFED should examine the possibility of a regional process.

#### **Next Steps**

Ms. Hansel explained that any feedback on the proposal is welcomed. Please provide comments to Ms. Hansel via e-mail ([hanselk@water.ca.gov](mailto:hanselk@water.ca.gov)) by mid-February.

#### **Watershed Legislation Update**

Laurel Ames (Sierra Nevada Alliance) informed the Work Group that Assembly Bill 730 (AB730) has been pulled for the year by Assembly Member Dickerson who felt that more public discussion was needed before the bill moved forward. Ms. Ames explained that beginning in late March, representatives from the Sierra Nevada Alliance and Regional Council for Rural Counties will hold "listening sessions" in an effort to talk through some disagreements. Ms. Ames presented a summary of comments on AB730 that have been received thus far.

A handout entitled "Concepts to Guide Drafting of New Watershed Bill" was also distributed to the Work Group. The concepts include the creation of a report chronicling funding sources made available to California entities since 1990. The report would contain the recipients of such funding; which federal or state agencies or private entities administered the funding or received the funding; the completed project resulting from the use of those funds; and an assessment of whether the project was successful. The report would also include current watershed management fund sources that are available to entities with California. The completed report would be delivered to the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee; the Senate Agriculture and Water Committee, and the Governor in January 2002.

#### **Future Direction and Funding of the Watershed Program**

Wendy Halverson Martin (CALFED) provided an update on the future direction and funding of the Watershed Program. Historically, the Watershed Program has received its funding through the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP). This year, Congress appropriated \$30 million for the ERP and \$30 million for non-ERP of which no funding was allocated to the Watershed Program. In early January, Ms. Martin and Mr. Lowrie sat down with Steve Ritchie

(CALFED Executive Director) to discuss the Watershed Program's future. It was decided that **although there is some overlap between the ERP and the Watershed Program, both programs should remain autonomous.** It was also agreed that the Watershed Program will move to **develop a Program Strategic Plan.** This activity will engage scientists, technical experts and local practitioners to help the Watershed program better define, describe and quantify the potential contributions of watershed management to the overall Bay-Delta solution. In addition, CALFED will provide funding for initial implementation of the Watershed Program. This funding will complement the ERP's plan to continue to support watershed management activities which are consistent with the recommendations of the ERP Strategic Plan.

#### **Ecosystem Restoration Proposal Solicitation Package Process for FY2001**

Rebecca Fawver (CALFED) discussed the process for developing an annual implementation plan for the ERP. The solicitation package for FY2001 is expected to be available in March 2000 with funding recommendations made in October 2000 for FY2001 funds. In future years, solicitation packages will be made available in January of each year. This process will allow for a more timely application of appropriated ERP funds following a federal fiscal year cycle.

Ms. Fawver explained that the FY2001 proposal will focus on the 12 critical uncertainties described in the ERP Strategic Plan as well as environmental education and watershed infrastructure. Submitted proposals should have a strong scientific base and address the goals and critical uncertainties as described in the ERP Strategic Plan. An Interim Science Board has been created to recommend FY2001 priorities and selection criteria.

Ms. Fawver stated that the proposal process would be discussed in detail at the Ecosystem Roundtable meeting on February 9, 2000.

#### **North Delta Bundle/Mokelumne-Cosumnes Watershed Alliance**

Rob Cooke (CALFED) presented an overview of the North Delta Bundle and the Mokelumne-Cosumnes Watershed Alliance (MCWA). The North Delta Bundle is one of seven bundles planned for CALFED's Stage 1A implementation. Four primary improvements are planned for the North Delta Bundle:

- Restore tidal marsh and riparian habitats along Georgiana Slough;
- Acquire and convert McCormick Williamson Tract to shallow water, wetland, and riparian habitat;
- Address flood control concerns in the lower North Delta region; and
- Study feasibility of Delta Cross Channel re-operation and 0-4K cfs Hood diversion.

CALFED's vision for the North Delta is to provide a coordinated regional solution to ecosystem, watershed, water quality, water supply reliability, and flood control concerns in the North Delta region. CALFED's role in the North Delta region is to implement the above-mentioned improvements and facilitate region-wide coordination of all projects in the North

Delta region. In an effort to better coordinate projects in the area, the MCWA was formed to provide a forum to gather existing groups and individuals that are working on projects in the watershed. The MCWA operates under the principles that:

- Resources should be managed as a system within the watershed, not as isolated pieces divided up into projects.
- All entities retain their authority. MCWA is not a decision-making body.
- All entities are encouraged (but not required) to contribute money and/or in-kind services to MCWA.

The MCWA has ten primary objectives:

1. Facilitate communication
2. Identify conflicts
3. Address regulatory concerns
4. Optimize resources
5. Identify funding opportunities
6. Encourage partnerships and improve integration
7. Develop and manage stakeholder database
8. Assist and facilitate stakeholder outreach and education
9. Develop and manage Program web page
10. Prepare assessment reports.

Four smaller work groups have evolved out of the MCWA: GIS work group; outreach/stakeholder work group; web-page work group; and modeling sub-group. An e-mail reflector has also been created for the group: [ndelta1@water.ca.gov](mailto:ndelta1@water.ca.gov). Please contact Rob Cooke for additional information on the North Delta Bundle or the MCWA.

### **CBC Watershed Work Group**

Nina Gordon (Resources Agency) announced that the next California Biodiversity Council (CBC) Watershed Work Group meeting is scheduled for January 21. The following meeting will be held in Redding on February 25.

Ms. Gordon also announced that a proposed MOU to release \$9 million for coastal salmon protection is expected to be released soon. Projects are hoped to be identified by June 2000.

*Update: A memo from Secretary Nichols and the proposed MOU was released on January 27. A stakeholder meeting is planned for Thursday, February 17, from 10-1, to discuss the MOU. The meeting will be held at 914 Capitol Mall, Room 500, in Sacramento. The deadline for comments has been extended to February 28. Please forward comments to Nina Gordon at [nina@resources.ca.gov](mailto:nina@resources.ca.gov).*

**Planning for February Work Group Meeting**

A date for the next two Work Group meetings were set for Thursday, February 17, and Friday, March 17.